

self the outward or manifest expression of the organized physicians of the State, brought into being to promote the standards of public health and of medical practice, in these latter years has therefore no other recourse—whether it wishes or not—than to try to solve the problems which a rapidly changing civilization has brought to the fore and thrust upon it.

* * *

Special Features of the Recent Session.—

Laying aside, now, these general reflections on trends in scientific and organized medicine, it may be in order to comment briefly on other phases of the recent annual session. The attendance was the largest ever recorded at Del Monte, and the scientific, organization, and social features all measured up to the best standards of former years. In spite of the hard times, the technical or commercial exhibits brought in the largest financial return yet registered for the Association. The dinner to Retiring President Roblee was marked by a peak attendance in the Hotel Del Monte dining room, with almost nine hundred places occupied. The Woman's Auxiliary, also, held its well attended meetings at the beautiful Del Monte Lodge. Everywhere, in fact, expression was given concerning the value of the 1939 session; and to all who lent aid in the arrangements, thanks are again tendered. The official proceedings may be gleaned by a perusal of the minutes of the House of Delegates and Council.*

* * *

Good Wishes to Newly Elected Officers.—

To the newly elected officers, greetings and best wishes for successful terms are extended by the members of the Association.

Dr. Harry H. Wilson of Los Angeles is the recipient of the great honor, that of being President-Elect of the California Medical Association, his career of service to scientific and organized medicine already covering many years of loyal and efficient endeavor in movements designed to advance the profession's best interests. His broad general training will make him a valuable executive in times such as the present; and, with other officers who were elected, he may be assured of everyone's whole-hearted support.

At the close of the Wednesday evening meeting of the House of Delegates, Dr. William W. Roblee of Riverside laid aside the responsibilities of the presidential office to welcome as his successor his 1895 classmate of Cooper Medical College, Dr. Charles A. Dukes of Oakland. To Doctor Dukes, also, is given the pledge of generous coöperation in the arduous work ahead.

Medicine in California may be faced, in days to come, with many serious problems; but with just causes, clear thinking, loyal support and keen leadership, it need have little fear concerning the future, remembering, however, that at the present time, as never before, a generous and united support is necessary for the successful advancement and attainment of policies decided upon.

* See pages 427 and 440.

PROPOSED COMPULSORY HEALTH LAW FOR CALIFORNIA: A. B. 2172

A. B. 2172 Fails of Passage in the Assembly: However, a Special Election Is in the Offing.—

Press dispatches, of which several are given space in this issue,* indicate that Assembly Bill 2172, providing for a compulsory, capitation health insurance statute, will fail of passage in the present Legislature, which body may adjourn before this June issue of the OFFICIAL JOURNAL is placed in the mails. For such a nonenactment, members of the medical profession in California may heave a sigh of relief, temporary though that ease may be. For, if the prognostications of the leaders among the proponents of such legislation may be accepted, it is more than probable that a compulsory health bill will be on the state election ballot of November, 1940, as an initiative measure.

If Governor Olson calls a special election within the next several months (and, it is reported, he so intends, to permit citizens to again vote on the "\$30 every Thursday" initiative), and if he includes in that call a compulsory health insurance law, it will then be necessary for the physicians of California to gird themselves for immediate battle on the issue.

* * *

Attitude of the Press.—The seriousness of the problem is one of the reasons so much space has been given for "Press Clippings" in recent numbers of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE; since it must be evident that, in a battle against a law that would have such a devastating effect upon medical practice and public health standards, it is most important that every member of the California Medical Association should have had the opportunity to acquaint himself as fully as possible not only with the major facts and principles involved, but also with the attitude of fellow citizens as reflected in the daily newspapers. The press dispatches in the present issue are of a hopeful nature, so far as immediate legislative action is concerned; but they also mention the imminence of the forthcoming initiative struggle which will call for united and whole-hearted action, both individual and collective, and this to be given without stint. There will be required, in addition, the expenditure of considerable sums to provide the educational literature at once needed in such a campaign. If, therefore, Governor Olson includes compulsory health legislation in the special session he has stated he would convene, members of the California Medical Association may expect to be called upon for an expression of strenuous civic activity such as they have never yet been requested to give.

* * *

Recent Article by Mr. Chester Rowell.—

Attention has been directed to the "press clipping" pages, in part because comments will here be made concerning Editor Chester Rowell's syndicated article of May 20, which has been given place, on page 454.

* See page 454.

It is to be hoped that every reader of CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE will take the time to peruse what Mr. Rowell recently wrote, particularly since he is the chairman of Governor Olson's Compulsory Health Committee, and presumably speaks with authority on the plans of the Administration, and also of the Committee and the other proponents of a compulsory system for California.

Having been present at speeches made by Mr. Rowell before the Commonwealth Club, having read many of his articles on the subject, having heard him and his supporters at the April 19 meeting in the Assembly Chamber at Sacramento, and listened also to the Administration's spokesmen when the "41 against" and "33 for" vote was taken in the Assembly on Tuesday, May 16, we confess that we were somewhat surprised on reading some of the statements in Mr. Rowell's article of May 20, referred to above.

Thus, the assertion:

"The only practical issue, therefore, was which way the vote of the people should be taken, and the Legislature has determined that it shall be by initiative."

Such a statement by Mr. Rowell must be construed as nothing else than one of editorial license. As a matter of fact, the Legislature made no commitment concerning an initiative, and did not vote on such a procedure. What took place was this: the Assembly indicated, by a vote of 41 to 33, that the compulsory health bill, as submitted in amended form on May 16, did not have its approval. What the proponents of the measure may have had in mind as regards an initiative was a matter not before the Assembly or Senate for vote.

The comment of Editor Rowell, in the paragraph immediately following the above and on the possible nature of "radical" and "conservative" initiatives, is of special interest, in that it seemingly indicates that these proponents are determined to force a vote on some kind of compulsory health law—whether good or bad, elastic or frozen, presumably not being in their minds of much importance. Remembering the expostulations heard from some of the advocates on the humanitarian needs of a compulsory capitation system, the "inhumanity" of forcing forthwith a possibly inelastic and harmful measure, with dire results to the very citizens whom they claim need more adequate medical care, certainly is indicative of inconsistency by such advocates. The attitude of some of these proponents seems to be that, having committed themselves to a certain type of compulsory health insurance, they are determined to bring the matter to final and immediate determination, without regard to whether there is urgent need therefor, or whether their much-amended and emasculated measure (for vote-getting purposes, supposedly), as by them expounded, will fulfill its exploited purposes. The thought comes to mind that there is here involved a certain amount of personal egotism by some of the propositional supporters. Certainly the issues at stake should transcend the will to be successful in the purely political battle.

Did space permit, one could continue with other exceptions to some of Mr. Rowell's statements. Members of the Association may well take the time to read the clipped excerpts in this issue, not only of his news, but of those of others. Their perusal will make for better presentation of the subject, when its various phases are taken up by physicians in the weeks to come, with both discerning friends and patients.

CALIFORNIA'S NEED FOR A BASIC SCIENCE LAW

California Has Three Examining Boards.—California is a State of "multiple examining boards." That is, it has legally authorized three different examining boards for healing art practitioners:

1. A board for nonsectarian practitioners holding the degree of Doctor of Medicine;
2. A board for the sectarian group known as Osteopaths; and
3. A board for another sectarian group catalogued as Chiropractors.

A third cultist group that has been knocking at the legislative doors for years is that whose members call themselves Naturopaths. This year, those belonging to this sect have put up a particularly strenuous fight and they may be counted upon again to present their statute in the 1941 Legislature asking for legal recognition.

In the present unsettled state of the public mind, common to lawmakers and the electorate, it is a question whether such a law, that would give necessary legal recognition by California to a third cultist group, could not, in the near future, go on to passage and enactment!

* * *

California Needs a Basic Science Law.—Which suggests, again, the great need of a Basic Science law for California—a subject that has been repeatedly commented upon and advocated in CALIFORNIA AND WESTERN MEDICINE.

Such a law, to be of value in California, and to ensure application to existing healing art examining boards, and any that may come into being in the future, must be enacted by initiative vote of the people.

Several drafts of a Basic Science law, adapted to California's requirements, have been made, and have been submitted to the Council. The Council, unfortunately, at several state elections was not in position to authorize action, partly because of the expense involved—about thirty thousand dollars being needed for the educational campaign and to secure the more than 200,000 signatures with precinct allocations, identified by notary. Other factors, also, have operated to postpone action, as when, in the November, 1938, state election, the antivivisection initiative was deemed of such paramount importance that the Council was again obliged to forego submittal of the much-wanted initiative.

It has been shown that in the commonwealths in which such statutes have been enacted there is a